

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY OSLO

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 OSLO 5578

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, SV, SU, US

SUBJECT: NORWEGIANS BELIEVE SOVIET SVALBARD CHARGES ARE PART OF
NORTHERN STRATEGY AND EFFORT TO REVISE SVALBARD TREATY UNI-
LATERALLY

REFS: (A) OSLO 5451, (B) OSLO 5449, (C) OSLO 3519

SUMMARY: MFA POLAR ADVISOR BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN HAS TOLD US
THAT IZVESTIA CHARGES THAT NORWAY IS VIOLATING DEMILITARIZATION
PROVISIONS OF SVALBARD TREATY WAS PRECEDED BY ORAL PROTEST
ALONG SAME LINES FROM SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN OSLO. BUCHER-
JOHANNESSEN SAID NORWEGIANS BELIEVE SOVIET CHARGES AND DEMARCHE
ARE PART OF BROAD EFFORT TO SOFTEN UP NORWAY IN THE NORTH AND

TO SEEK TO REVISE PROVISIONS OF SVALBARD TREATY UNILATERALLY.
REVISION WOULD SEEK TO LIMIT MEANS BY WHICH NORWEGIANS
COULD ENFORCE SOVEREIGNTY AND NEW RESOURCE CONTROL MEASURES,
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SUCH AS THOSE IN FISHERY CONSERVATION. AS ON MAJOR PAST SOVIET

ATTEMPTS TO APPLY DEMILITARIZATION TO LIMIT NORWEGIAN ACTION, HE THOUGHT GOM WOULD HAVE TO HOLD FIRMLY TO ITS OWN POSITION. HE CONFIRMED THAT SOVIETS HAVE AGREED TO EARLY BOUNDARY TALKS AND THAT THEIR EFFORTS TO DISCREDIT MFA LEGAL ADVISOR ELIASSEN AS NEGOTIATOR WOULD BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE. END SUMMARY

1. NORWEGIAN MFA OFFICIALS BELIEVE MOSCOW'S RECENT CHARGES THAT NORWAY IS VIOLATING DEMILITARIZATION PROVISIONS OF SVALBARD TREATY ARE PART OF BROAD-GAUGED SOVIET EFFORT TO SOFTEN UP NORWAY ON WIDE-RANGE OF ISSUES IN NORTH AND ADDITIONALLY TO SEEK TO REVISE SVALBARD TREATY UNILATERALLY. IN REVIEW OF INTENSIFICATION OF SOVIET NORTHERN ACTIVITY IN PAST WEEK WITH EMBOFF ON OCT 27 MFA POLAR ADVISOR BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN SAID NORWEGIANS FELT SOVIETS WERE OBVIOUSLY GIVING THEM THE "HOT AND COLD" TREATMENT TO SOFTEN THEM UP IN NORTH.

2. HE CONFIRMED THAT ON OCT 19 SOVIET AMBASSADOR KIRICHEMKO MADE DEMARCHE TO FOREIGN MINISTER FRYDENLUND TO DELIVER ORAL NOTE DECLARING SOVIETS REGARD VISITS BY NORWEGIAN MILITARY SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT TO SVALBARD ARE CONTRARY TO DEMILITARIZATION PROVISION ARTICLE 9 OF SVALBARD TREATY. PRESENTATION REFERRED AS WELL TO RECENT VISITS OF NORWEGIAN MILITARY AIRCRAFT, WHICH NORWEGIANS TOOK TO MEAN JULY VISIT THERE OF PRIME MINISTER NORDLI (REFTEL C).

3. SOVIETS HAVE PROTESTED POTENTIAL AND SOME SPECIFIC NORWEGIAN MILITARY ACTIVITIES BEFORE AS BEING CONTRARY TO THE TREATY. BUT THIS IS FIRST TIME THEY HAVE SOUGHT TO GENERALIZE PROTEST TO INCLUDE ALL MILITARY SHIP AND AIRCRAFT VISITS. IN 1951, FOR INSTANCE, AFTER NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT'S DECISION JAN 19, 1951, TO PUT NORWEGIAN FORCES UNDER JOINT NATO COMMAND, GOVERNMENT REPORT (STORTING REPORT, NO. 20) STATED BOTH SVALBARD AND JAN MAYEN WOULD BE INCLUDED IN NORTH ATLANTIC COMMAND UNDER CINCLANT'S MILITARY RESPONSIBILITY. SOO AFTER, SOVIETS PROTESTED THE REPORT'S REFERENCE TO SVALBARV IN LATE 1950'S AND EARLY 1960'S SOVIETS CHARGED THAT NORWEGIAN PLANS TO ESTABLISH EUROPEAN SPACE RE-SEARCH ORGANIZATION SATELLITE STATION AND PERMANENT ALL-WEATHER AIRFIELD WERE CONTRARY TO DEMILITARIZATION PROVISIONS OF TREATY. NORWEGIANS HELD THEIR GROUND AND WENT AGEAD WITH THE PROPOSAL AND TWO PROJECTS DESPITE SOVIET PROTESTS.

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4. THE NORWEGIAN NAVY HAS MADE ANNUAL VISITS TO SVALBARD SINCE END OF WORLD WAR II. SOVIETS MADE EARLIER DEMARCHES ON SPECIFIC VISITS OF MILITARY VESSELS AND AIRCRAFT AS ARTICLE 9 VIOLATIONS WHEN THE SOVIET CONSUL IN BARENTSBERG GAVE WRITTEN PROTEST TO SVALBARD GOVERNOR IN JUNE 1974 BECAUSE TWO NORWEGIAN NAVY SHIPS CALLED AT LONGYEARBYEN ON MAY 17, NORWAY'S NATIONAL DAY, THAT YEAR. IN AUG 1974 SOVIET EMBSSSY OFFICIAL PROTESTED

TO BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN IN MFA ON A VISIT OF NORWEGIAN ORION MILITARY AIRCRAFT, AND IN MARCH 1976 SOVIETS PROTESTED LANDING ON FEB 24, 1976, OF ANOTHER NORWEGIAN ORION MILITARY AIRCRAFT CARRYING HELICOPTER SPARE PARTS TO SVALBARD.

5. SOVIETS HAVE NOT MENTIONED AUG 1975 MILITARY AIRCRAFT LANDING OF PLANE CARRYING NORWEGIAN PRIME MINISTER BRATTELL, NOR LANDINGS DURING 1950'S AND 1960'S OF MILITARY PLANES CARRYING MAIL AT THE ICE AIRFIELD AT LONGYEARBYEN.

6. BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN SAID SOVIETS COULD HAVE SEVERAL OBJECTIVES IN MIND. INITIALLY, THEY COULD BE INTENSIFYING THEIR ENTIRE APPROACH TO IMPORTANT NORTHERN ISSUES AND BEGINNING TO LINK THEM INTO A BROAD WHOLE FROM WHICH COULD BE FRAMED A PACKAGE DEAL WHEREIN SOVIETS COULD SEEK TO GET NORWEGIANS TO MAKE CONCESSIONS THEY MIGHT NOT MAKE ORDINARILY UNDER PRESENT SEPARATE ISSUE APPROACH.

7. SECONDLY, AND BECAUSE OF HIS SVALBARD RESPONSIBILITIES, HE WAS PARTICULARLY CONCERNED ABOUT WHAT HE SAW AS SOVIET ATTEMPT TO REVISE THE SVALBARD TREATY UNILATERALLY BE ALTERING PREVIOUS PRACTICE AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DEMILITARIZATION PROVISIONS. HE SAID SOVIETS ARE NOW INITIATING AN EFFORT TO CHALLENGE ALL PAST AND POTENTIAL NORWEGIAN MILITARY RELATED ACTIVITIES ON SVALBARD.

8. INsofar AS SVALBARD CONCERNED, BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN SAID HE BELIEVES SOVIETS MAY BE CONCERNED ABOUT EFFECT ON SOVIET POSITION AND ACTIVITIES OF NORWAY'S MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN ITS SOVEREIGNTY ON THE ISLANDS AND POSSIBLE PROVISIONS TO REGULATE FISHERIES AROUND SVALBARD. IMPLEMENTATION OF EACH OF THESE ACTIVITIES MAY REQUIRE ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS WHICH COULD WORRY SOVIET AUTHORITIES.

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9. BY ACTING AGGRESSIVELY NOW SOVIETS WOULD INDICATE THEIR POSITION AND, UNDER THEIR IDEAL CONDITIONS, GET NORWEGIANS TO ACCEPT IT. SHORT OF THAT, BY USING SUCH AGGRESSIVE POSTURE THEY COULD HOPE TO GET NORWAY TO ACT MORE CAUTIOUSLY IN ENFORCING SVALBARD ACTIONS, BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN SAID.

10 BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN SAID HE THOUGHT LATEST SOVIET EFFORT COULD BE TRACED TO WIDE-RANGING PREPARATIONS SOVIETS MADE IN FALL OF 1973 FOR SVALBARD LEGAL DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN GON AND USSR IN FEB-MAR 1974. IN OSLO DURING THESE BILATERAL TALKS IT WAS CLEAR THAT SOVIETS HAD MADE FULL REVIEW OF THEIR SVALBARD INTERESTS AND POSITION AND THAT THEY WERE READY TO TAKE POSITIONS TOUGHER THAN THEIR EARLIER ONES. IN PARTICULAR, THEY TOLD NORWEGIANS THAT USSR INTERPRETED ITS SVALBARD ECONOMIC RIGHTS

TO INCLUDE ALL ECONOMIC RIGHTS AND NOT JUST THE CATEGORIES OF RIGHTS DEFINED IN TREATY. NORWEGIANS, OF COURSE, DISAGREED WITH THIS.

11. BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN SAID NORWAY DISAGREED WITH THE LATEST SOVIET CHARGES AND IN HIS VIEW WOULD HAVE TO HOLD ITS GROUND AGAIN DESPITE INCREASED SOVIET PRESSURE.

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12. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH DCM MOD UNDER SECRETARY HOLST NOTED THAT NORWAY FACES PROBLEMS IN EMPLOYING SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT TO SURVEY AND ENFORCE FISHERY, ENVIRONMENTAL AND OTHER RESOURCE EXPLOITATION REGULATIONS IN NORTHERN SEAS AREAS. HOLST SAID NORWAY'S TASK THIS REGARD WOULD BE HELPED GREATLY IF SURVEILLANCE AND ENFORCEMENT VESSELS COULD USE BASE AT SVALBARD. OTHERWISE TIME AND FUEL REQUIREMENTS WOULD MAKE SUCH OPERATIONS EXPENSIVE AND DIFFICULT. BUT THE SOVIETS, HOLST SAID, WOULD PRESUMABLY BE UNHAPPY IF NORWEGIANS USED SVALBARD FOR COAST GUARD AIRCRAFT, ESPECIALLY IF THESE WERE ORION AIRCRAFT TRADITIONALLY ASSOCIATED

WITH ASW OPERATIONS. THEREFORE, SOVIETS MIGHT NOW BE
RAISING DEMILITARIZATION ISSUES TO PUT GON ON NOTICE ABOUT
FUTURE USE OF SVALBARD FOR COAST GUARD ACTIVITIES.

13. HOLST SUGGESTED THAT IF SOVIETS CONTINUED TO ALLEGE THAT
ARTICLE 9 HAD BEEN VIOLATED, NORWAY COULD PROPOSE TO USSR THAT
NORWAY INVITE TREATY SIGNATORIES TO FORM A COMMISSION TO
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INVESTIGATE ALLEGED VIOLATIONS ON SVALBARD. HOLST THOUGHT THAT
MIGHT COOL THE SOVIETS' ON THEIR ALLEGATIONS.

14. REFERRING TO ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE SOVIETS HAD AGREED TO
RESUME BOUNDARY TALKS IN OSLO SOON BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN CONFIRMED
THAT DURING FOREIGN MINISTER FRYDENLUND'S MEETING WITH SOVIET
FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO AT UNGA, FRYDENLUND HAD DISCUSSED
RESUMING THE TALKS. LAST WEEK SOVIET EMBASSY APPROACHED MFA
TO SAY THAT, ON BASIS OF FOREIGN MINISTERS' DISCUSSION AND AT
ENCOURAGEMENT OF SOIET EMBASSY IN OSLO, SOVIETS WISHED TO RESUME
BOUNDARY DISCUSSIONS SOON.

15. REFERRING TO PRESS SPECULATION THAT IZVESTIA CRITICISM OF
ELIASSEN (REFTEL A) WAS DESIGNED TO UNDERCUT ELIASSEN AS NEGOTIATOR
FOR A MORE TRACTABLE LOS MINISTER EVENSEN, BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN
SAID HE WAS SURE ANY SUCH SOVIET EFFORT WOULD BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE
IN NORWAY. YET, IN PUTTING FINGER ON ELIASSEN, BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN
SAID, IT WAS CLEAR SOVIETS MEANT TO DO HIM HARM. BUT IT WAS ALSO
CLEAR UNDER SUCH A SOVIET CRITICISM NO NORWEGAIN GOVERNMENT COULD
OR WOULD REMOVE HIM AS ITS PRIME NEGOTIATOR.

16. ELIASSEN TOLD EMBOFF OCT 26 HE EXPECTED TO HEAD NORWEGIAN
DELEGATION FOR BOUNDARY NEGOTIATIONS, WHICH WOULD TAKE PLACE
END NOVEMBER OR EARLY DECEMBER. HE SAID HE COULD ONLY ASSUME
SOVIETS HAD SOMETHING NEW TO OFFER SINCE THEY HAD TAKEN INITIA-
TIVE TO CALL FOR TABKS NOW.

17. COMMENT: BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN'S ASSESSMENT OF THE SOVIET
PURPOSE IN ATTACKING NORWAY ON THE DEMILITARIZATION PROVISIONS
SEEMS TO US TO BE REASONABLE. WHILE, BECAUSE OF HIS RESPONSI-
BILITIES FOR SVALBARD, HE TENDS TO EMPHASIZE THE SVALBARD ASPECTS
OF THE NORHTERN ISSUES, IT IS CLEAR FROM HIM THAT THE NORWEGIANS
ARE AWARE THAT THEY ARE GETTING THE CARROT AND STICK TREATMENT
AND THAT THE OTHER SIDE IS EXPANDING THE GAME INTO THE WHOLE
NORTHERN AREANA WHERE A PROPOSED BILATERAL SOLUTION LUMPING THE
VARIOUS ISSUES COULD BE THE NEXT SOVIET PLAY.
ANDERS

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